

MANDATORY TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION STANDARDS
FOR FIRE SERVICE PROFESSIONALS

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE

BY: Eriks Gabliks

Department of Public Safety Standards and Training
Monmouth, Oregon

An applied research project submitted to the National Fire Academy
as part of the Executive Fire Officer Program.

December 1999

ABSTRACT

This research project analyzed whether the fire service should have a mandatory versus voluntary standard for training and certification. The Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) had been asked by its constituents, the Oregon fire service, to update the standards system currently in place to train and certify fire service professionals in the state. During work on this project, the Board on Public Safety Standards and Training (BPSST) - Fire Advisory Committee recommended that the Oregon fire service establish a set of minimum mandatory standards which would apply to volunteer, career and combination fire agencies. The purpose of the project was to produce an evaluation of mandatory state fire service training and certification standards.

This research employed both historical and action research to answer the above questions. The historic research allowed for a thorough review of meeting documents which led to the establishment of mandatory fire service training and certification standards. Action research, combined with a survey, identified states which had mandatory fire service training and certification standards. Action research was also used to identify mandatory training and certification standards in other public safety disciplines.

The major finding of this research was that very few states have adopted mandatory fire service training and certification

standards. At the opposite end of the spectrum, research found that each state has adopted a minimum standard for those personnel who provide emergency medical care to the public. Additionally, research found that the majority of states have adopted mandatory training and certification standards for law enforcement officers.

Moreover, more states have adopted, or are in the process of adopting, mandatory training and certification standards for public safety telecommunications professionals rather than firefighters.

The recommendations resulting from this research included: (a) continued review and improvement of a training and certification standards system for the fire service in Oregon; (b) establish an on-going program through which firefighter training and certification standards in other states are monitored; and (c) continued dialogue with the Oregon fire service regarding professional accountability through mandatory training and certification standards.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	2
TABLE OF CONTENTS	4
INTRODUCTION	5
BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE	6
LITERATURE REVIEW	9
PROCEDURES	18
RESULTS	19
DISCUSSION	26
RECOMMENDATIONS	28
REFERENCES	31
APPENDIX A (Letter & Questionnaire Sent)	35
APPENDIX B (Questionnaire Results).....	38

INTRODUCTION

In 1993, the Fire Standards and Accreditation Board (FSAB) and State Fire Training Division were transferred from the Office of State Fire Marshal to the Board on Public Safety Standards and Training (BPSST). On June 13, 1997, the BPSST Fire Advisory Committee (FAC) empowered an Ad-Hoc Committee to review the system used to train and certify fire service professionals in Oregon. In less than one year, on February 20, 1998, this Committee had completed its task and submitted its final report to the FAC. The report identified six strategic areas which if adopted would strengthen the system which was created by the Oregon fire service in 1973 to train and certify its members. The most dynamic recommendation was that the Oregon fire service take charge of its own industry/profession and establish three levels of mandatory certification for those who respond to the public's request for fire and rescue assistance during times of emergency.

The purpose of this research project was to evaluate fire service training and certification standards across the nation and identify those which are mandatory and the impact similar changes could have on Oregon's fire service. The problem was that since Oregon's fire service training and certification standards were established in 1973 they have been voluntary (FSAB Annual Report, 1974). Until the Ad-Hoc Committee Report, little had ever been discussed by the fire service community regarding mandatory fire training and certification standards for the fire service. The

purpose of the project was to produce an evaluation of training and certification systems used nationally by state fire training agencies, as well as other public safety professions including law enforcement, corrections, parole and probation, emergency medical technicians, and public safety communications. This was necessary so that the agency and its constituents could objectively evaluate the direction which should be taken in this strategic area. This study used both historical and action research.

The research questions that were answered were:

1. When was the need for mandatory standards and training identified for fire service professionals and what has been done since that time?
2. What states have adopted mandatory standards for the training of fire service professionals?
3. How the fire service compare to other public safety disciplines in relation to mandatory training standards?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Board on Police Standards and Training (the Board) was established in 1961 by the Oregon Legislative Assembly at the request of Oregon's police chiefs and sheriffs. "The purpose for the Board was to establish minimum standards for training, employment, certification, and training for Oregon's law enforcement community" (DPSST Budget Report, 1999, p. 3).

The Fire Standards and Accreditation Board (FSAB) was created by the 1973 Oregon Legislative Assembly with the assignment to "adopt uniform standards and procedures for the accreditation of fire service personnel and their training courses" (FSAB Annual Report, 1974).

Over the next 30 years, the scope and mission of BPST would grow to include corrections and parole and probation officers, as well as public safety telecommunicators and emergency medical dispatchers (DPSST Budget Report, 1999). In 1991, the name of the Board was changed to reflect the expanded scope and mission - the new name of the agency became the Board on Public Safety Standards and Training (BPSST). In 1993, FSAB and the State Fire Training Division were transferred from the Office of State Fire Marshal to BPSST. In addition to the move, the BPSST Board was expanded to 23 members to allow various fire service professionals and organizations to be represented.

In 1997, the BPSST was reorganized by Governor Kitzhaber and the Oregon Legislative Assembly. As a result of this

reorganization, the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST or the Department) was established by statute as a cabinet level agency answering directly to the Governor. The Board still consists of 23 governor-appointed members who have limited management oversight over the Department. By statute, the Board is active in the establishment of standards for training and certification. Five discipline-specific advisory committees (police, corrections, telecommunications, fire, and private security) are used to provide input and direction to the Board regarding training and certification standards.

"Training for law enforcement, corrections, parole and probation officers, telecommunicators and emergency medical dispatchers is mandated by state statute." (Secretary of State, 1997, Statute 181.610) There is no statutory mandate that requires fire service personnel to be trained and certified by the Department to provide the services of a firefighter. Since the merger of fire service programs into the DPSST system, on-going concerns have been voiced regarding the quality and stature of fire service training in the State of Oregon. As the training and certification standards for law enforcement, corrections, and telecommunications are mandatory, they are reviewed and updated on a five-year cycle and receive the bulk of the DPSST budget (DPSST Budget Report, 1999). On the opposite side of the spectrum, due greatly to its voluntary nature, fire service training and certification receives approximately 13% of the Department's

biannual budget, or \$ 1.6 million dollars (DPSST Budget Report, 1999).

DPSST has spent a great deal of time, management oversight, and fiscal resources to establish a fire training system which is effective and responsive to the needs of professional firefighters, regardless of whether they are working in career, combination, or volunteer fire agencies. The fire service has been very vocal in providing input on the direction of fire training and certification programs. One of the recommendations of the BPSST Fire Advisory Committee was to implement three mandatory certification levels for fire training and certification standards (BPSST Ad-Hoc Committee Report on Fire Certification, 1998).

This research topic relates to two modules of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer course, Strategic Management of Change. The first module, managing change, is applicable as the BPSST Fire Advisory Committee, the Department, and constituents have identified this as a desired change in the Ad-Hoc Committee Report. Second, it relates to the personal aspects of change module of the course as personal reactions, barriers, and critical communication must be completed before the change(s) can be suggested and/or implemented.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Professional Dangers and Mandatory Standards - An Historic Review

The important role that firefighter serves in our communities was clearly recognized by President Harry Truman in a letter he sent to the International Association of Firefighters on August 1, 1952. In his letter, President Truman wrote, "Your members are at their posts, day and night, ready to accept the call of duty, to protect the lives and property of their fellow citizens. They do so at risk of life and limb. For their devotion and heroism, they deserve the praise of all Americans" (Clinton, 1999). While this statement was written to a labor organization representing career firefighters throughout the United States and Canada, it illustrates how important the role of the firefighter is in our society.

In 1966, the first ever meeting of an ad-hoc committee of our nation's fire service leaders was held in Racine, Wisconsin. This first conference on Fire Service Administration, Education and Research was called Wingspread and played an important part in identifying the challenges America's fire service would face in the following years. This group identified twelve key areas of concern which were having an impact on the fire service. These issues ranged widely from the behavior patterns of the public which have a direct influence on the fire problems to the unprecedented demands being placed on the fire service by rapid social and technological changes. One of these twelve areas is

significant to this research subject, professional status begins with education (The Johnson Foundation, 1966). The report identified that "virtually all crafts, vocations, and technical areas and professions have established minimum training requirements." (The Johnson Foundation, 1966). Wingspread also referenced a report written by Leonard Silk for the Committee for Economic Development which identified that each true profession has a very rigid educational requirement that must be met before one can enter the profession (Silk, 1960).

Four issues were identified in this category during the Wingspread gathering. The most important in this area was that "a profession should prescribe ways - controlled in some degree by the members of the professional association - of entering the profession by meeting certain minimum standards of training and competence." (The Johnson Foundation, 1966)

In 1976, a second Wingspread conference was held. Since the first conference, several positive actions were taking place. For example, several states had already established standards for the selection and training of fire service personnel. The number of colleges offering fire service training and degree programs had increased tenfold. And finally, a model set of professional standards had been created through a joint effort of the National Fire Protection Association and a newly created National Qualifications Board. The report did identify as an issue that the deliberate and systematic development of all fire service

personnel from skilled level firefighter to fire service executive was still needed. (Clark, 1976).

In 1986, yet a third Wingspread Conference was held. The introduction reports that tremendous progress has been made in the education and professionalization of the fire service since the first Wingspread Conference in 1966. While it is true that a great deal has been done, professional development was once again identified as an area where the nation's fire service could improve. This is especially true as the fire service has been changing from its traditional role of fire suppression to an increased mission which now includes fire inspection, fire prevention education, hazardous materials and emergency medical incident response. While the conference report recognized that a number of states have joined the voluntary national certification system, the majority still had not. The report recognized the importance of the system and encouraged all states to adopt similar certification programs (The Johnson Foundation, 1986).

Finally, the most recent Wingspread Conference, held in 1996, continues the forty-year trend by recognizing that fire and emergency services managers must increase their professional standing to remain credible to community policy makers and the public through a nationally recognized integrated system of training and certification. This conference did not specifically mention the training and certification of line personnel but did identify that the fire service needed to comply with the same

regulations which apply to private industry in the area of environmental incidents including personnel safety and training (International Association of Fire Chiefs, 1996).

Mandatory Standards and Training for the Fire Service

Unfortunately, the critical work done by the firefighter continues to be dangerous. In a 1994 article in *Time* magazine, Firefighting was listed as the 10th most dangerous job in relation to the number of fatal job-related injuries per 10,000. A recent report by the United States Department of Labor indicates that from 1992 through 1997 an average of more than 40 firefighters died each year from injuries suffered on the job. More important was data that indicated firefighters have 16.5 fatal injuries per 100,000 employed during this same time period. This is more than three times the national average, which is 4.7 deaths per 100,000 employees. This study did not include deaths that were caused by either heart attacks or illnesses. This study also dealt only with career firefighters, not volunteers (Baltic, 1999). This is important to note, as in 1996 there were over 815,500 volunteer firefighters in the United States and of the 31,503 fire departments in the nation 89% are all or mostly volunteer (Windisch, 1999).

A related article in *Fire Engineering*, a fire service trade magazine, indicated that while the number of firefighters who die each year fighting fires remains the same as it did ten years ago,

the number of working fires has decreased by approximately 30 percent. The author's belief is that the reason for this may be that the fire service has become the jack-of-all-trades providing additional services such as emergency medical aid and hazardous materials response without maintaining the mastery and proficiency of fire suppression skills (Roxner, 1999).

While the need to increase the professionalism of the fire service was identified as early as the inaugural Wingspread conference in 1966, and while firefighting continues to be one of the most dangerous jobs in the United States, very few states have initiated or adopted mandatory training and certification standards to professionalize the industry. In the early 70's the Oregon Accident Prevention Division (APD), now known as the Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division (OSHA) had used a horizontal standard to establish safe operating and employment practices for Oregon industries. This same set of standards was applied to logging, farming, and mining, as well as fire suppression. This is an interesting correlation as logging and farming both have a higher instance of fatal job-related injuries than firefighting (Time, 1996).

Research of the origins for the development of a specific standard for the fire service could not be found. However, Don Milligan, Fire Chief of Polk County Fire District #1 (Retired) and the Oregon Fire Chiefs' Association representative to the Oregon OSHA Advisory Committee during this time frame provided useful

information regarding the development of this standard. Chief Milligan stated, "During the mid-1970s, Oregon OSHA initiated a joint project with the Oregon fire service to develop a set of vertical standards that specifically addressed issues related to fire suppression, such as safety equipment and inspection, emergency vehicle safety and maintenance, and other fire service specific issues. This joint effort took several years to accomplish and was modeled after similar safety standards in place in the State of Washington and the Canadian Province of British Columbia."

Chief Milligan also noted that the working group also adopted as models various "best practices" which were in place and being used by various Oregon fire agencies. One of the "best practices" adopted as a minimum standard by Oregon OSHA, Oregon Administrative Rule 437-002-0182, specifically addressed the need for the training of firefighters. This standard requires that each fire agency, or employer, establish and implement a policy for the initial and on-going training of personnel at all levels."

This standard also requires that firefighters complete the DPSST Basic Firefighter Course before they can engage in structural firefighting activities or in live-fire training in a structure. (Oregon OSHA, 1999 - OAR 437, Division 2 Subdivision L).

The State of Washington Department of Labor and Industries, through Washington Administrative Code 296-305-05009, directs an employer to provide training to an employee commensurate with

those duties which that person will perform. The State of Michigan has a similar rule through its Department of Labor. Michigan law, Part 74, Rule 7411, requires similar training which must be provided before the employee is able to perform in emergency operations. To determine the origin of this requirement, Greg Kirt the Director of Fire Service Training for the State of Michigan was contacted. Director Kirt advised that the mandatory standard was the outcome of a tragic accident. In 1986, three Michigan firefighters lost their lives during a training exercise in an acquired structure.

Director Kirt further advised that as a result of this incident, the leaders of Michigan's largest fire service organizations, representing fire chiefs, volunteer firefighters, career firefighters, and fire instructors agreed to an increased emphasis on training through legislative action. In 1988, Michigan Public Act 196 was adopted which requires that each career firefighter successfully pass the Firefighter I and II test administered by the Michigan Firefighters Training Council (Michigan Firefighters Council, 1994). Volunteer firefighters have 24 months to successfully pass the Firefighter I exam. All of these tests are based on the NFPA 1001 Standard on Firefighter Professional Qualifications.

In the Southern United States three states, Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi, have taken significant steps toward adopting mandatory standards for firefighter training. The Alabama

legislature, through Alabama Code 36-32-7, requires that a firefighter trainee employed by public agencies complete training prescribed by the Alabama Fire Academy and Personnel Standards Commission. Those who choose not to abide by this mandatory training standard are subject to a fine not to exceed \$1000.00. Certification and training for volunteer firefighters is available but not mandatory by Alabama Code.

An internet search indicated that the State of Georgia had a mandatory training standard for firefighters but the information could not be retrieved electronically. As a result, a telephone call was placed to the state TRADE member, the Georgia Public Safety Academy, where I was able to speak with State Fire Training Program Coordinator Lyn Pardue. Mr. Pardue stated that the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Commission has had a similar law in place since 1971. This law requires municipalities that employ more than 3 career firefighters to meet the Georgia Firefighter Course which is based on the NFPA 1001 Standard.

In 1991, legislators in Mississippi adopted similar legislation through Mississippi Code 45-11-201, which directs the Mississippi State Fire Academy to establish the standard and provide the training. The state also uses the NFPA 1001 Standard for Firefighter to address the mandate.

In the Northeastern United States two states, New York and New Hampshire, have adopted mandatory standards for firefighter training. The New York State Office of Fire Prevention and

Control through legislation requires full-time career firefighters to successfully complete a 229 hour course, and requires career fire officers to successfully complete 120 hours of training. Volunteer firefighters in New York state do not have a mandatory training standard. It is believed that New York was the first state to adopt such a professional standard almost 20 years ago in 1981 (New York State Fire Control Minimum Standards, 1993).

New Hampshire career firefighters adopted similar legislation although the reason was to protect pension and retirement benefits for those members who were injured in the line of duty. Chapter 700 of the New Hampshire Code of Administrative Rules requires a full-time career firefighter to successfully complete prescribed training. This training currently is to the Firefighter II level of the NFPA 1001 Standard.

The research convinced me that a number of states had made significant steps in developing and adopting mandatory standards and training for fire service professionals. While the need for these standards was identified over 40 years ago through a cooperative effort of our nation's fire service organizations, few states have adopted them.

PROCEDURES

The desired outcome of this research was to provide information which would allow DPSST to determine if mandatory fire training and certification standards exist in our nation's fire service. Historic research was used to conduct a literature review to provide insight into the origins of fire training and certification systems for fire service professionals. This research began at the National Fire Academy's Learning Resource Center in Emmitsburg, Maryland and was continued at the Western Oregon University Library in Monmouth, Oregon as well as the City of Dallas Public Library in Dallas, Oregon.

Action research was used to gather and evaluate printed information from national fire service organizations, fire service trade journals as well as printed and electronic information from other states as to the true existence of mandatory fire service training and certification standards. In addition, action research was used to evaluate mandatory training standards of allied public safety professions including law enforcement, corrections, parole and probation officers; emergency medical technicians and paramedics; and telecommunications personnel. This research also began at the National Fire Academy's Learning Resource Center in Emmitsburg, Maryland and was continued at the Resource and Information Center located at the Oregon Public Safety Academy in Monmouth, Oregon and the Multnomah County Central Library in Portland, Oregon.

During the research process it was clear that both the words "mandatory" or "mandate" and "standard" could be ambiguous and required definition. Webster's Third New International Dictionary defines "mandatory" as "containing, constituting or relating to a mandate." "Mandate" is defined as "an authoritative command, order, or injunction: a clear instruction, authorization or direction." Webster's defines "standard" as a synonym which is the "value, quality, level of degree of a thing" (Webster, 1981).

A survey instrument was created to evaluate the implementation of statewide mandatory fire training and certification standards on a national basis. This survey, located in Appendix A, was sent to all 50 state fire training directors. While each state does not have a specific state agency responsible for fire service training and certification, the National Fire Academy, through its Training Resource and Data Exchange (TRADE) Program, recognize the agency serving in that capacity. In some states fire training and certification councils serve this purpose. In other states, the fire training program is part of a college or university education system and the state fire personnel certification system is part of the state fire marshals office, an independent state fire certification commission, or a department of public safety.

The survey asked two very specific questions. First, had the state officially adopted a mandatory training requirement for fire

service personnel? Second, what type and/or levels of training was mandated?

RESULTS

Research Question 1. The first three-day training for firefighters was held at the University of Illinois in 1925. This class led the United States Chamber of Commerce to establish a Fire Service Exchange Committee to encourage such activities in each state (Monigold, 1995). It wasn't until 1966 that the issue of professionalism through standards training and certification for the nation's fire service was discussed at a symposium of national fire service leaders. At this symposium, participants identified the need for professional status and career development in the fire service.

Since the initial Wingspread Symposium in 1966, one of the issues that continued to be identified through Wingspread II in 1976, Wingspread III in 1986, and Wingspread IV in 1996, is the professionalism of the fire service through training, education, standards and certification. While the issue of professionalism through training and education was identified in 1966, very few states have stepped forward to adopt mandatory standards for training of career and volunteer fire service professionals.

Research Question 2. Since the initial Wingspread conference in 1966, quite a few states have taken steps toward professionalization of the fire service through mandatory training standards. Some of these mandates have been driven by fire service organizations, while most by other state regulatory agencies. Out of the fifty states, 19 have adopted some form of a mandatory standard for either training and/or certification. While this number may seem high, it is actually misleading as only ten states, Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio and West Virginia have adopted these requirements through their own professional regulatory bodies. Of these ten, nine regulate career firefighters but only four of those states, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and West Virginia include volunteer firefighters. One state, Maryland, has adopted mandatory standards only to certify fire service instructors. Eight states did not originally submit a completed survey. Each of these states was contacted through follow-up telephone calls during which time the survey was completed over the phone, with just two states that did not respond. Personnel at other agencies were unavailable or unable to be contacted. Upon conclusion, 44 of the 50 states participated in the survey.

The Indiana State Fire Training Agency requires that career and volunteer firefighters receive a minimum twenty-four hours of training. This training is broken down as follows: 1 hour

orientation; 2 hours personal safety; 2 hours forcible entry; 2 hours ventilation; 2 hours fire apparatus; 4 hours ladders; 6 hours self contained breathing apparatus; 1.5 hours hose loads; 2 hours special hazards; and 2 hours Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) awareness. All other fire service training in the state is voluntary.

In Ohio, the Department of Public Safety - Division of Emergency Medical Services - Sub-Committee for Firefighter Training requires that volunteer and part-time firefighters complete a 36-hour Firefighter IA course which is based on the Firefighter I portion of the NFPA 1001 Standard. Career firefighters must attain 240 hours of training which includes Firefighter I and II as described in the NFPA 1001 Standard.

The Michigan Firefighters Training Council requires, through Michigan Public Act 196, that all career firefighters successfully complete both a written and practical examination for Firefighter I and II, based on the NFPA 1001 Standard, before they complete their first year of service. Volunteer firefighters must successfully complete a written and demonstrated examination for Firefighter I, based on the NFPA 1001 Standard, before they complete their second year of service. It is important to note that while the Michigan Firefighters Training Council requires mandatory testing, it does not specify the number of hours or topics required for this training.

Effective January 1, 1994, the West Virginia State Fire

Commission requires that all firefighters (career and volunteer) complete the West Virginia University Fire Service Extension Program Firefighter I course before they engage in actual firefighting. This course is a minimum of 30 hours and does not include first aid, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, and hazardous materials training, which is also required by law. The West Virginia State Fire Commission also requires tactics and administration training for officers.

As mentioned, five states, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, New Hampshire and New York, require training only for career firefighters. The Alabama Fire College and Personnel Standards Commission requires that each career firefighter successfully complete the Firefighter I training program, based on the NFPA 1001 Standard. The Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Commission requires that municipalities who employ more than three firefighters successfully complete the Georgia Firefighter Course based on the NFPA 1001 Standard. The Mississippi Fire Academy requires that any firefighter who works over 2800 hours a year complete training based on the NFPA 1001 Standard. New Hampshire, through the New Hampshire Department of Safety - Division of Fire Standards and Training, requires a full-time career firefighter to complete a program of study based on NFPA 1001 within one year of original appointment. The State of New York Office of Fire Prevention and Control requires through statute that both career firefighters and career fire officers attend training. Career

firefighters are required to complete 229 hours of training and career fire officers are required to receive an additional 120 hours of training.

The University of Maryland, in cooperation with the Maryland Fire & Rescue Institute, require through Maryland Title 11, Section 11-503 that emergency services instructors be trained and certified to the Instructor II level as defined in the NFPA 1041 Standard for Emergency Services Instructor. This requirement has been in place since May 1997.

Nine states - California, Connecticut, Maine, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Washington, and Wisconsin mandate training of fire service personnel through their respective occupational safety and health agency (OSHA). Each state makes a variety of recommendations on training and other safety issues which affect the fire service so that personnel are properly equipped and trained to perform their jobs in a safe manner. Some states require specific training which is to be provided while others simply direct or suggest that the employing agency provide the appropriate training to their personnel.

Finally, Utah does not establish a mandatory level of training or certification but does require fire agencies to be working toward Firefighter I or wildland "red card" certification if they wish to be eligible for state grant monies.

Research Question 3. Research through the International Association

of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST) 1997 Sourcebook indicates that criminal justice agencies nationwide have a variety of mandated training standards in place.

43 of the 50 states reported having uniform state-mandated minimum performance objectives for full-time law enforcement officers. 14 of the 50 states reported having uniform state-mandated minimum performance objectives for auxiliary law enforcement officers. Of these 14, seven required that an auxiliary officer have the same training as full-time law enforcement officer. 11 of the 50 states reported having uniform state-mandated minimum performance objectives for reserve law enforcement officers with only one state requiring that a reserve officer have the same training as full-time law enforcement officer. 25 of the 50 states reported having uniform state-mandated minimum performance objectives for part-time law enforcement officers, Of these 25, only one state did not require that a reserve officer have the same training as full-time law enforcement officer.

28 of the 50 states reported having uniform state-mandated minimum performance objectives for full-time corrections officers.

14 of the 50 states reported having uniform state-mandated minimum performance objectives for full-time parole and probation officers. 17 of the 50 states reported having uniform state-mandated minimum performance objectives for public safety telecommunications personnel.

According to a recent survey printed in the December 1999 issue of Emergency Medical Services Magazine, each of the fifty states have adopted the NHTSA basic curriculum for both Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) and Paramedics as the basis for their states mandatory training and certification program. The emergency medical services system was greatly influenced by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) in the 1980s. NHTSA provided each state with thousands of dollars of grant monies to train and equip personnel who would participate as members of an organized emergency medical response system.

The research for this project, as well as the survey, revealed a great deal of useful information, but also areas of concern. The information gathered strengthened the belief that mandatory training and certification standards do exist in various states. These standards have been successfully adopted for career as well as volunteer fire service personnel. The Professional Qualifications System of the National Fire Protection Association is used as the basis for these standards in a number of states throughout the country. Of concern was the fact that, unlike our law enforcement and emergency medical services peers, less than a dozen state fire training and certification organizations had adopted formal mandatory standards for fire service personnel.

DISCUSSION

While state fire training programs have played a dynamic role in the picture of the nation's fire service since 1937, (Monigold, 1995) less than 19 have adopted mandatory training standards for fire service personnel. The initial discussion regarding the need for professional standards and training began in 1966 when a symposium was held of national fire service leaders, yet of those states with mandatory training standards, only ten are regulated by a peer group made up of professionals who establish training and certifications standards for their profession. Of these ten states, four, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, and West Virginia, have established mandatory standards that apply to any person who will serve as either a career or volunteer firefighter. Michigan has the most comprehensive program which does not require training specifically but does require that a career firefighter be able to successfully complete both a written and skills examination for Firefighter I and II based on the NFPA 1001 Standard within their first year of service. Volunteer firefighters must successfully complete both a written and skills examination for Firefighter I again based on the NFPA 1001 Standard but within their first two years of service.

Nine states had mandatory requirements through their respective occupational safety and health agencies which identified either specific or general firefighter training. This was an issue of concern as these mandatory standards were adopted

and managed by organizations which were not created by or for the fire service industry.

A review of allied public safety professions provided a different view of mandatory minimum standards. 43 states mandated training and/or certification of full-time law enforcement officers by legislatively established peer regulatory boards and commissions. Of these 43, 14 also regulated auxiliary law enforcement officers, 11 regulated reserve law enforcement officers, and 25 regulated part-time law enforcement officers. A review of emergency medical technician and paramedic regulatory organizations found each state to have a mandatory standard in place which was based on a standard curriculum developed by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA).

This information was both useful and encouraging to me as I conducted the research for this paper. Useful in that it indicates there are a number of state fire training and certification agencies which have established mandatory standards for fire service professionals. Even more encouraging was the system established in Michigan which included both career and volunteer firefighters in a system which did not mandate training but did mandate successful completion of an written and demonstrated examination based on the NFPA 1001 Standard. This system design will be very useful in Oregon for two reasons. First, Oregon is in the process of changing from a state-specific firefighter training and certification standard to the NFPA 1001

Standard. Second, if Oregon continues to discuss a mandatory minimum standard for the fire service, the Michigan system allows for flexibility for both career and volunteer firefighters.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Over the past three years DPSST has begun the process of updating the training standards used to certify fire service professionals in Oregon. The research completed during this project clearly indicates that a number of states have mandatory standards for the training and certification of fire service professionals. While the survey conducted during this project indicated that several states had adopted minimum standards, there were significant differences in the types of training, as well as the number of hours required to accomplish the required training needed to meet the specific state's standard.

The work done by the DPSST Ad-Hoc Committee needs to be updated, continued and discussed further with the various professional organizations which represent the fire service. If the Oregon fire service truly wants its state fire training and certification agency to be funded in a manner similar to its law enforcement counterparts, it will need to step forward and take accountability for its profession through the establishment and oversight of minimum mandatory standards.

DPSST should also implement an on-going system through which

it tracks, evaluates, and if necessary updates, the standards in place in other states. This process should be designed so that it is timely and should be maintained on a three-year cycle.

The Department should continue to work on these training and certification standards issues through its Fire Advisory Committee. As mentioned in the Introduction, the Fire Advisory Committee established a strategic plan over three years ago. This plan contains several significant goals and issues which affect Oregon's fire training and certification system. This plan needs to be updated to reflect the current goals, objectives, values, and philosophies of Oregon's fire service community.

Finally, proposed changes to the plan, mandatory training and certification standards need to consider the various impacts they may have on Oregon's volunteer fire service. Mandatory fire service standards promulgated by state fire training programs can have a devastating impact when you consider that roughly 80% of the fire service is made up of volunteers who take time away from home and work to complete increased training requirements (Arwood, 1998). Superintendent Billy Frost of the South Carolina Fire Academy said it best when he wrote, "training is not about the training staff's comfort or the schedule of department officers. It's about the students' needs and the public they protect (Frost, 1998)."

REFERENCES

Alabama Fire College and Personnel Standards Commission (State of Alabama). (1996) *Policies, procedures, and regulations of the commission*. Tuscaloosa, Alabama: Author.

Arwood, R. (1998, December). *State money spent to train volunteers varies greatly*. Fire Chief, 24-26.

Baltic, S. (1999, September). *Firefighting remains a dangerous business*. Fire Chief, 15.

Barr, R. (1988, December). *History-organization-status of the national professional qualifications system for the fire service 1972-1988*. Quincy, Massachusetts: Author.

Board on Public Safety Standards and Training (State of Oregon). (1996) *1996-1997 Strategic Plan*. Monmouth, Oregon: Author.

Board on Public Safety Standards and Training (State of Oregon). (1995) *Fire service training survey*. Monmouth, Oregon: Author.

Clark, W. (1976) *Wingspread II statements of national significance to the fire problems in the United States*. Racine, Wisconsin: Author.

Clinton, W. (1999, March 22) *Remarks to the legislative conference of the International Association of Firefighters*. The White House, Washington, DC: Author.

Department of Labor and Industries (State of Washington).
(1996) *Washington administrative code*. Olympia, Washington:
Author.

Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (State of
Oregon). (1998) *Agency budget request 1999-2001*. Monmouth,
Oregon: Author.

Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (State of
Oregon). (1999) *Ad-Hoc Committee Report on Fire Training and
Certification*. Monmouth, Oregon: Author.

Fire Standards and Accreditation Board (State of Oregon).
(1974) *1974 Annual report*. Salem, Oregon: Author.

Frost, B. (1998, October). *Hands-on training needed for real-
world demands*. Fire Chief, 32.

International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement
Standards and Training. (1997) *Sourcebook - standards and training
information in the United States*. Richmond, Virginia: Author.

International Association of Fire Chiefs. (1996) *Wingspread
IV statements of critical issues to fire and emergency services in
the United States*. Dothan, Alabama: Author.

Johnson Foundation. (1966, February) *Wingspread conference on
fire services administration, education and research*. Racine,
Wisconsin: Author.

Johnson Foundation. (1986, October) *Wingspread III statements
of national significance to the fire problems in the United
States*. Racine, Wisconsin: Author.

Michigan Firefighters Training Council (State of Michigan). (1994) *Laws, regulations, and standards pertaining to Michigan's fire service*. Lansing, Michigan: Author.

Mississippi Fire Academy (State of Mississippi). (1999) *Mississippi fire academy annual report*. Jackson, Mississippi: Author.

Monigold, G. (1995, January/February). *State fire training: what the numbers tell us*. National Fire Protection Association Journal, 61-67.

New Hampshire Department of Safety - Division of Fire Standards and Training. (1993) *New Hampshire code of administrative rules*. Concord, New Hampshire: Author.

New York Office of Fire Prevention and Control. (1993) *Minimum standards for firefighting personnel in the State of New York*. Albany, New York: Author.

Occupational Safety and Health Code (State of Oregon). (1999) *General occupational safety and health rules - subdivision L: fire protection*. Salem, Oregon: Author.

Office of State Fire Marshal (State of Oregon). (1993) *Fire service training master plan*. Salem, Oregon: Author.

Rixner, J. (1999, March). *Let's get back to the basics of firefighting*. Fire Engineering, 38.

Secretary of State (State of Oregon). (1997) *Oregon revised statutes*. Salem, Oregon: Author.

Silk, L. (1960). *The education of businessmen*. New York Committee for Economic Development, 9.

Spivak, M. (1999, December). *State and provincial survey of emergency medical services*. Emergency Medical Services, 216-250.

Staff. (1997, May 27). *Risky business*. Time, 16.

Stankiewicz, J. (1994, April). *West Virginia firefighter training*. Firehouse, 32.

Webster, M. (1981). *Websters Third New International Dictionary*. Springfield, Massachusetts.

Windisch, F. (1999, June). *The national volunteer fire summit report*. International Association of Fire Chiefs - Volunteer Chief Officers Section, 16-20.

APPENDIX A

On Department Letterhead

Date

Dear State Fire Training Director:

The Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) is responsible for establishing minimum training and certification standards for Oregon's 12,000 career and volunteer firefighters. Currently we have a task force working on a complete overhaul of training and certification system.

Our task force would like to find out if your state has mandatory certification and/or training standards. We would also like to find out what these standards are and how they are applied. Enclosed please find a questionnaire which we kindly ask you to complete and return by _____. We would also be interested in obtaining a copy of the certification and training standards used by your state.

If you would like a copy of our task force report, or if I can be of assistance, please feel free to call me at (503) 378-2100 ext 255.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Eriks J. Gabliks, Assistant Director
State Fire Service Training Manager

State of Oregon
Department of Public Safety Standards and Training
Fire Service Training Section

Mandatory Fire Service Training & Certification Standards
State Survey

State:

Name:

Phone:

E-Mail:

1. Has your state adopted any mandatory training and certification standards for fire service personnel?

_____ YES

_____ NO
2. What type of mandatory standards has your state adopted?

_____ YES

_____ NO
3. If this standard has not been adopted by your agency which agency has adopted this as a mandatory standard (for example: OSHA)?

Thank you for your time and participation. Let us know if you would like a copy of our survey results. Please feel free to attach any information which we may find useful in our process.

Please return completed survey to:

Eriks Gabliks
DPSST - State Fire Service Training
550 N. Monmouth Avenue
Monmouth, OR 97361

APPENDIX B

Survey Results

Alabama

Mandatory YES
Requirement Career firefighters - NFPA 1001
Adopted By Alabama Fire College

Alaska

Mandatory NO
Requirement Not Applicable
Adopted By Not Applicable

Arizona

Mandatory NO
Requirement Not Applicable
Adopted By Not Applicable

Arkansas

Mandatory No Response
Requirement No Response
Adopted By No Response

California

Mandatory YES
Requirement CPR, SIDS, other related classes
Adopted By Various state agencies

Colorado

Mandatory No Response
Requirement No Response
Adopted By No Response

Connecticut

Mandatory YES
Requirement Hazardous Materials, CPR. Bloodborne Pathogens
Adopted By CFR 1910.120

Delaware

Mandatory NO
Requirement Not Applicable
Adopted By Not Applicable

Florida

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Georgia

Mandatory	YES
Requirement	NFPA 1001 - Firefighter I - Career Firefighters
Adopted By	Georgia Fire Standards and Training Commission

Hawaii

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Idaho

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Illinois

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Indiana

Mandatory	YES
Requirement	Firefighters must receive 24 hour course
Adopted By	Indiana State Fire Marshals Office

Iowa

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Kansas

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Kentucky

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Louisiana

Mandatory	No Response
Requirement	No Response
Adopted By	No Response

Maine

Mandatory	YES
Requirement	Training commensurate with job duties
Adopted By	Maine State Law - Public Law 552

Maryland

Mandatory	YES
Requirement	Instructors must be certified to NFPA 1041 - II
Adopted By	Maryland Fire & Rescue Institute and the University of Maryland

Massachusetts

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Michigan

Mandatory	YES
Requirement	Career firefighters test to NFPA 1001 - I & II Volunteer firefighters tested to NFPA 1001 - I
Adopted By	Michigan Firefighters Training Council

Minnesota

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Mississippi

Mandatory	YES
Requirement	Career firefighters test to NFPA 1001 - I & II
Adopted By	Minnesota Fire Academy

Missouri

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Montana

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Nebraska

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Nevada

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

New Hampshire

Mandatory	YES
Requirement	Career firefighters test to NFPA 1001 - I & II
Adopted By	New Hampshire Department of Safety - Division of Fire Standards & Training

New Jersey

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

New Mexico

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

New York

Mandatory	YES
Requirement	Career firefighters 229 hours of training Career fire officers 120 hours
Adopted By	New York Office of Fire Prevention and Control

North Carolina

Mandatory Requirement	YES
Adopted By	Training commensurate with job duties North Carolina OSHA

North Dakota

Mandatory Requirement	NO
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Ohio

Mandatory Requirement	YES
Adopted By	Career firefighters - NFPA 1001 I & II Volunteer firefighters - FF IA - 36 hours Ohio Department of Public Safety

Oklahoma

Mandatory Requirement	NO
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Oregon

Mandatory Requirement	YES
Adopted By	Basic Firefighter Course Oregon OSHA

Pennsylvania

Mandatory Requirement	YES
Adopted By	Hazardous materials training Environmental Protection Agency

Rhode Island

Mandatory Requirement	No Response
Adopted By	No Response

South Carolina

Mandatory Requirement	YES
Adopted By	Training commensurate with job duties South Carolina OSHA

South Dakota

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Tennessee

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Texas

Mandatory	NO
Requirement	Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable

Utah

Mandatory	NO and YES
Requirement	Training and working toward certification is only required for fire agencies who wish to receive state grant monies.
Adopted By	New Mexico State Law

Vermont

Mandatory	No Response
Requirement	No Response
Adopted By	No Response

Virginia

Mandatory	No Response
Requirement	No Response
Adopted By	No Response

Washington

Mandatory	YES
Requirement	Training commensurate with job duties
Adopted By	Washington Labor and Industries (OSHA)

West Virginia

Mandatory	YES
Requirement	West Virginia University Firefighter 1 course
Adopted By	West Virginia Fire Service

Wisconsin

Mandatory Requirement	YES Those performing fire suppression tasks must receive 60 hours of training within 24 months of hire
Adopted By	Wisconsin Department of Commerce - Industry, Labor and Human Relations

Wyoming

Mandatory Requirement	NO Not Applicable
Adopted By	Not Applicable